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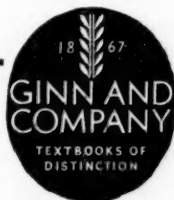
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ST. AUGUSTINE ON SEMANTICS AND CERTAIN PROBLEMS OF TEACHING

No one who has read the Confessions of St. Augustine can be insensitive to the keen understanding which he exhibits toward the trials and despair experienced by the child as it painfully acquires an education and enters, as he put it, 'the stormy society of human life'.¹ The psychological penetration and close observation which he devotes to the process of child-development might awaken the respect of modern child-psychologists working with the most approved experimental methods. Drawing both upon the memory of his parents and his own adult experience, he describes in surprising detail the infant's manner of expressing its desires, by crying if these are not immediately satisfied, and the steps in growth so well known to parents: sucking, laughing, and crying in revenge.² That jealousy observed at a very early age,³ the first attempts to speak, the connection of names with things pointed out by his elders,⁴ are included in his brief account of the earliest and most formative years in the life of the child.

That these clinical notes are scattered among extraordinary outpourings of religious passion and remorse is all the more remarkable as Augustine pursues his subject into the later years of boyhood. When he went to school to learn those *linguosae artes* by which he was presumably to get on in life, he prayed, like any other child, that he might not be beaten for neglecting his studies;⁵ there is a depth of adolescent cynicism in the conviction which he soon reached that his teachers too

were more fond of play than of work, although they dignified their adult folly with the term *negotia*, as vain of their learning as Augustine was of his skill at playing ball.⁶

He did not love to study;⁷ and, though forced to his books, he realized with the soundest of wisdom: *nemo enim invitus bene facit, etiamsi bonum est quod facit*. He is not quite consistent in the expression of his dislike for studies; he hated Greek and Latin grammar but had a more than usual love for Latin literature. He, like many a modern school boy, was to discover how valuable that grammar actually was; but at the time he preferred the delightful fictions of Vergil to the less charming realities of *primae illae litterae*.⁸ Truly, the curtains at the doors of the grammar schools where the sellers and buyers of grammar plied their trade hid many an error committed behind them. All this fore-shadows that life-long preoccupation with rhetoric for which he later repented but could never put wholly from him. It is still a shining truth to most school-boys that the more practical knowledge that 'one and one make two and two and two make four' is a hateful *rigmarole*; but the wooden horse, the sack of Troy, the ghost of Creusa herself, are full of the greatest enchantment.

In a famous passage he expressed the striking thought that Vergil must have been as difficult for Greek children as Homer was for himself: yet the difference lay in the strangeness and difficulty of the foreign language, not in the nature of the tales each poet told. Even Latin was once a strange tongue to him until he picked it up, as did Montaigne, from the chatter of his nurses, illustrating thus for himself a principle of education which has since become a mighty dogma to the 'progressive' educators: *Hinc satis elucet*

¹Augustine, *Confessions*; ed. M. Skutella (Leipzig, Teubner, 1934) I.vii.13: *vitae humanae procellosam societatem*.

²I. vi. 8-9.

³I. vii. 11: *vidi ego et expertus sum zelantem parvulum: nondum loquebatur et intuebatur pallidus amaro aspectu conlactaneum suum*.

⁴I. viii. 13.

⁵I. ix. 14.

⁶I. ix. 15.

⁷I. xii. 19.

⁸I. xiii. 20.

maiores habere vim ad discenda ista (i.e., languages) liberam curiositatem quam meticulosam necessitatem. Or, in other words, let the child learn by his own unhampered curiosity rather than by stern force.⁹ But he did not go further, with Rousseau and his lineal descendants, the direct methodists, and abandon all restraint upon choice of subject matter; he admitted that the useful words which he learned might have been better derived from more serious branches, such as grammar, than from the stories of the poets.

The boyhood of the saints is not always dissimilar to that of other boys. During that rather unsaintly period, Augustine stole from the family pantry and sold the plunder to his playmates. He cheated at games, he rebelled against admitting his faults, remorsefully adding: *Istanc est innocentia puerilis?*¹⁰ in the same breath comparing to his own credit these deeds with the more serious delinquencies of his elders. Then, too, there had been the night when he, with some wild comrades, robbed a neighbor's pear tree, eating some of the fruit but throwing most of it to the pigs.¹¹ Augustine had plenty of pears in his own yard, a fact which added another burden to his conscience; his heart-stricken analysis of the deed shows how heavily it weighed upon him thereafter.¹²

And in the course of adolescence, love came to him as to any other, the calf-love of children to whom the world with its pleasures is sufficient, before the sense of sin is forced upon them. Adolescence brought its pangs, at sixteen, when he might already by the conventions of the time have been safely married. In the midst of his rhetorical studies, his travels began; from Madaura to Carthage he journeyed. His mother, an exceptional person, gave him advice and guidance which Augustine failed to heed; he continued to boast of his misdeeds among his companions, he tumbled in the mire and sowed his wild oats in Babylon, while his mother grew more and more concerned for him.¹³

The further pages of the Confessions do not often recall his childhood: their autobiographical nature requires, of course, a progression in chronology. Gradually Augustine's psychological powers were turned upon the world about him and toward other people, to Alypius, his dear friend, whom he almost allured into matrimony and who was once mistaken for a thief and saved from punishment only by Augustine's timely arrival, and to Nebridius, who confuted the Manichees. His thoughts and days were filled with teaching, religious doubts, the contemplation of marriage, and the confusion of opposing doctrines vying for his adherence.

The *De Catechizandis Rudibus* has been spoken of in admiration as containing some of Augustine's best thought on educational psychology. There is really little in this treatise on the proper manner of administering the catechism to justify large claims. The earlier chapters describe the difficulty of the speaker in convincing himself that his words are taking the desired effect upon his hearers and that they are enjoying those words.¹⁴ This is an experience every teacher has had, especially if he is repeating unchanged a set of lectures years out of date. Augustine gives the reason for his feeling of inadequacy in sentences which go deeply into the psychological problem of communication: *Nam et mihi prope semper sermo meus displicet. Melioris enim avidum sum, quo saepe fruor interius, antequam eum explicare verbis sonantibus coepero: quod ubi minus quam mihi notus est evaluero, contristor linguam meam cordi meo non potuisse sufficere.*¹⁵

When the powers of speech fall short of one's knowledge of the subject matter, one is immediately exposed to the worn reproach: he knows the subject but he can't teach it.

It is essential that the teacher enjoy his work in order to impart that sense of intellectual enjoyment to the pupil.¹⁶ The power of intuitive sympathy in learning is most efficacious.¹⁷ Drawing out the questions of the student, as we might say 'getting the class to talk', is quite as delicate a task to Augustine as to modern teachers.¹⁸ A lively remark, a joke or two, will come in handy when the student begins to yawn. Not all are to be taught by the same methods; individual attention is needed, as educators today are never tired of insisting. Practice-teaching, i.e., watching Augustine at his task of communicating knowledge, is better than reading what he dictates.¹⁹ The discourse must be limited, unified, comprehensive, with points properly emphasized and the interest of the students stimulated.²⁰

It is indicative of Augustine's broad and deep conception of what we call the psychology of education that he concentrates frequently upon the central problem of education, the accurate communication of ideas and facts. This pre-occupation can be perhaps best observed in two treatises. The first of these is a

¹⁴Migne PL 40 (1887), 311, Chap. II.

¹⁵ibid. II. iii.

¹⁶ibid. II. iv: *Et re quidem vera multo gratius audimur, cum et nos eodem opere delectamur; afficitur enim filium locutionis nostrae ipso nostro gaudio, et exit facilius atque acceptius.*

¹⁷XII. xvii.

¹⁸XIII. xviii.

¹⁹XV. xxiii, . . . non eadem est omnibus adhibenda medicina.

²⁰III. v.

⁹I. xiv. 23.

¹⁰I. xix. 30.

¹¹III. iv. 9.

¹²II. v-ix.

¹³II. iii. 8.

dialogue between Augustine and Adeodatus called simply *De Magistro*.²¹ As first sight this schoolmasterly work seems far away in its scholastic attention to minutiae of language, foreshadowing the age of Abelard, from the problem as it has been posed and developed in our own day.²² A closer examination will reveal, however, Augustine's genuine concern about the meaning of words and the signs of ideas, a phrase which might serve as a subtitle for the dialogue since it is concerned primarily with accurate meanings, *De Verborum Vi et Officio*, in the editor's description. That dangerous ambiguity in the use of words which has begun to give cause for grave concern to modern students is the key to understanding Augustine's patient hair-splitting with Adeodatus. He was conscious of the fact that Latin was an imperfect tongue in this respect, especially in the schools and in the expression of philosophic thought. He was struggling with a task which the Schoolmen were to accomplish with brilliant success; but he was not yet in possession of the entire new vocabulary which they were to construct for their purposes. For example, *verbum* means both 'word' and 'verb'; it is used in a general and in a restricted (grammatical) sense. Further, *nomen* means both 'name' and 'noun', and may similarly give rise to ambiguity. Like a good schoolmaster, Augustine leads his pupil to analyze the meaning, not the parsing, of a line from Vergil (*Aeneid* II, 659) and forces upon him a realization of the treacherous nature of what we now call, as if we had just discovered it, the problem of semantics.²³ Words and things, the signs of ideas and their actual meanings, are difficult to bring into proper focus and relationship.²⁴

It is true that Augustine's approach to the psychological problem of communication is by way of grammar, which to him was the only available and adequate

system of referents, as Stuart Chase calls them. He avoids the fantastic etymologizing to which a lesser Mediaeval writer would at once have turned had he treated a similar subject. Augustine's great interest in grammar is exhibited elsewhere in more detail;²⁵ it is a passion among literary men of the Middle Ages. He is only one in a long line of men from Roman antiquity to the present day who have recognized its extreme importance in education.

Augustine continues the discussion of ascertainment of meanings in a second treatise, *De Doctrina Christiana*.²⁶ This, like all his work on the subject, is devoted primarily toward promoting an understanding of Scripture and the truth of Catholic Christianity. Its four books deal generally with the objects of faith, conventional signs and their meanings, ambiguous signs in Scripture, and the mode of making meanings known. A great amount of material of a miscellaneous sort is collected in this treatise and commented upon in respect to its usefulness for the Christian student. Homonyms in Latin and Greek, environmental influences on language-meanings, folk-superstition, the ambiguities arising from punctuation and pronunciation, the three styles of Christian oratory, the utility of shorthand, history, natural science, dialectics, and number in contributing toward understanding are among the subjects briefly treated. Reading by context, that constant watchword of the present-day language teacher, appears in a clear statement in one place.²⁷ Augustine's remarks on textual criticism contain much good sense; together with those of Cassiodorus, one may see in them a small but important part of the foundation from which was to arise the science of text-tradition and its history in the nineteenth century.

The strongest impression made by this work consists in the emphasis laid by Augustine on the careful and minute study of languages.²⁸ Rhetoric as such is less important; although the fourth book deals with the means of making meanings known by eloquence,

²¹Migne, PL 32 (1877), cols. 1193-1220.

²²Cf. I. A. Richards and C. K. Ogden, *The Meaning of Meaning* (New York, Harcourt Brace, 1925); I. A. Richards, *Practical Criticism* (ibid. 1929); *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (New York, Oxford Univ. Pr., 1936); *Interpretation in Teaching* (New York, Harcourt Brace, 1938).

²³Cf. Stuart Chase, *The Tyranny of Words* (New York, Harcourt Brace, 1938); Alfred Korzybski, *Science and Sanity* (New York, The International Non-Aristotelian Library Publishing Co., 1933); Boris B. Bogoslovsky, *The Technique of Controversy* (New York, Harcourt Brace, 1928); William Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (ibid. 1931); R. W. Jepson, *How to Think Clearly* (Toronto, Longmans Green, 1937); Aldous Huxley, *Words and Their Meanings* (Los Angeles, Ward Ritchie Press, 1940). The subject goes back, of course, to Plato.

²⁴Cf. the long recapitulation of the argument by Adeodatus, Chap. VII, cols. 1205-1207; A shorter recapitulation in Chap. X: *Nam ex quo inter nos verba iaculamur, quod tam diu fecimus, haec tria ut inveniuntur laboratum est: utrum nihil sine signis possit doceri: et utrum sint quaedam signa rebus quas significant praeferenda: et utrum melior quam signa sit rerum ipsa cognitio.*

²⁵*Soliloquiorum libri duo*, Migne PL 32 (1877), cols. 869-904; cf. II, xi, col. 894, on grammar as a true discipline: *Est autem grammatica vocis articulae custos et moderatrix disciplina, as opposed to the myth-making propensity of man.* Augustine also wrote a complete treatise *De Grammatica*: Migne, ibid. cols. 1385-1408; cf. *Retractiones*, I, vi.

²⁶Edited by H. J. Vogels, in *Florilegium Patristicum* (Bonn, P. Hanstein, 1930), XXIV, 1-103. M. L. W. Laistner, *Thought and Letters in Western Europe. A. D. 500-900* (New York, Lincoln MacVeagh, 1931), 31, speaks in the following terms of this work: 'But Augustine's profoundest contribution to educational theory, which, however different its approach and content, can rank with the best that Plato, Isocrates, and Cicero had uttered on the subject, is the long treatise, *De Doctrina Christiana*'.

²⁷II. xiv. 21.

²⁸II. xi. 16; xvi. 23.

with frequent reference to the words of the Apostle Paul, it is not part of a discourse on rhetoric, he insists. Following Cicero in the main, Augustine regards wisdom as more important than rules of rhetoric or skill in speaking. The first aim of the Christian speaker is to be understood;²⁹ and he who teaches will avoid all words which do not teach.³⁰ Augustine is no purist, for all his careful analysis of orthography, connotations, and pronunciation; the word which expresses the speaker's thought most clearly is to be chosen, even if it is not quite pure.

The foregoing sketch does not intend to make of Augustine a neglected pioneer in the study of semantics or educational psychology. It is an attempt to throw into relief, however, the fact that he is well aware of problems that have in our own time given rise to imposing schools of thought; in connection with almost precisely the same questions as those which he treated, modern educational psychologists and students of the psychology of language have presumed to erect elaborate structures of theory, plausibly documented with experimental research, apparently without any knowledge of his work or of the work of his predecessors back to Plato. We have in these aspects of Augustine's wide range of thought only another instance of the present necessity for 're-discovering' the Classics of Christian thought which has not yet come to its full recognition despite the manifold and profound consequences of another great era of 're-discovery', the Renaissance.

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THUCYDIDES' *πρόγνωσις* AND THE ORACLES

One of the leading ideas of Thucydides' history, is *πρόγνωσις*, the correct foreknowledge of human behavior. Grounded on the unchangeable nature of man as manifested in the recurrent pattern of history *πρόγνωσις* is the basis of Thucydides' purpose in writing his History and forms one of his criteria in judging the greatness of a statesman. The History itself, as Finley states, is 'in essence, a manual for future statesmen, instructing them in the outcome of conditions destined to be repeated'.¹

Πρόγνωσις is clearly related to medicine, as Thucydides himself brings out in his description of the plague: 'for myself, I shall simply set down its nature, and explain the symptoms by which perhaps it may be recognized by the student, if it should ever break out

again.² Finley, in his analysis of Thucydides' intellectual background, has also shown that *πρόγνωσις* must be associated with the sophists who 'assume a stable world in which men respond to given circumstances, and this mechanistic reasoning was valid because it permitted men, they thought, to understand and thus in part to foretell human behavior'.³

Our understanding of Thucydides' *πρόγνωσις* becomes clearer if we examine it in the light of the antitheses which, as Finley has shown, characterize the intellectual background of Thucydides and are reflected in the antithetical style and ideas of contemporary prose and poetry.⁴ In the world of Aeschylus, Pindar, and Herodotus man is a shadow of the gods. In Herodotus, the statesmen of the Greek city-states are guided in their policies by the oracle of Delphi. Their foreknowledge of events issues not from man but from the god. Since statesmanship is thus integrally related to the oracles, man is a pawn of the gods. The exception to the rule is Themistocles, who astonished Thucydides by a display of *πρόγνωσις* at a time when the sophists had not prepared the ground for the exercise of it on the part of statesmen. That Pericles and Antiphon should exercise *πρόγνωσις* was understandable, for they had been trained in their age to use man's powers to understand and expound prognostically the elements of a situation.⁵

With the decline of the oracles after the Persian War, with the growth of rationalism and man's new reliance on his own mind, the statesman of Thucydides' world had to find a substitute less fallible than the oracles, something organically related to the cause and effect relationship exhibited in medicine. Medicine had freed itself from the divine and had developed *πρόγνωσις*. Could not human affairs admit similar progress? Applying the mechanical causation of Ionian science to man and his world, the sophists assumed a stable world whose forces act on man with such repeated patterns of reaction that *πρόγνωσις* is possible. A statesman could be trained to prognosticate, even as a physician.

In such a world the future statesman would find in Thucydides' history a treatise on *πρόγνωσις*, a study of forces at work on human nature, which would enable him to predict the future, no longer through oracles, but through an insight into cause and effect. This

²II.48.3; cf. C. N. Cochrane, *Thucydides and the Science of History* (Oxford, 1929). The medical word *πρόγνωσις* is not found in Thucydides; the conception is expressed through *προέγνω* the participles *προγνώους* *προγνώντες* and *πρόνους* (II. 64.6; 65.6.B).

³Finley, op. cit., 70.

⁴Ibid. chapter II.

⁵Ibid. 96-7.

²⁹IV. viii. 22.

³⁰IV. x. 24.

1J. H. Finley, *Thucydides* (Cambridge, Mass. 1942), 50.

rationalism rules out the oracles and substitutes *πρόγνωσις*. As Thucydides surveys the past, the man who saved Athens in the Persian War was far ahead of his times, for Themistocles, like his successor Pericles, did not rely on the oracles. *Κράτιστος αὐτοσχεδιάζειν τὰ δέοντα* (I. 138.3) meant use of man's reason rather than Delphi to grasp the future course of events.

Πρόγνωσις versus the oracles is thus another aspect of the conflict between reason and religion. We must also raise this antithesis into relief in contrasting Herodotus and Thucydides. Finally, we must include it among the many antitheses which permeate Thucydides' intellectual background and find expression in his style and thought.

JAMES A. NOTOPOULOS

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REVIEW

The Chronology of Hellenistic Athens. By WILLIAM KENDRICK PRITCHETT and BENJAMIN DEAN MERITT. pp. xxxvi+158. \$5.00¹ Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1940.

This book has two parts. Readers primarily interested in Greek history will find the well documented introductory table of archons and secretaries of the Council (the Priests of Asklepios are also included) from 307/6 to 101/0 valuable as a chronological framework for the third and second centuries—a reference list which has required no real modification² in the five years since its publication, and which will probably remain standard for some years to come. A very useful characteristic of this table is the clear and compendious indication of established sequences connecting groups of archons and the evidence for them. The reader is also shown where the connection of archon and secretary is definitely known, and again the evidence is quoted in the table. It is thus possible to form at first glance a rough idea of the degree of certainty attaching to the position of any given archon.

The rest of the book consists of detailed epigraphical argument. So much of it indeed is technical and con-

troversial that it cannot even be read without having at one's elbow, as a minimum equipment, Dinsmoor's Archons of Athens in the Hellenistic Age, and Athenian Archon List in the Light of Recent Discoveries, I.G. II², and the issues of *Hesperia*. It is, as the authors say, "essentially a book for specialists". This will discourage the unepigraphical reader, so that it may be well to call attention, first of all, to some of the more interesting historical results:

'The demonstration (pp. 1-7) that there are only three or four extant decrees which can be attributed to the ten-year period during which Demetrios of Phaleron ruled Athens—as opposed to from fifty to seventy-five (at a rough count) for each of the preceding and succeeding decades—shows that the Athenian ecclesia was comparatively inactive under that benevolent despot, and emphasizes the point, made elsewhere by Meritt, that democracy went hand in hand in Greece, as it usually has since, with publicity for state affairs.

It is argued at length and convincingly that the new tribes, Antigonis and Demetrias, were projected before the end of 308/7, even though they did not begin to function until the middle of 307/6. This conclusion is interesting because it shows how completely Athens was freed by the departure of Demetrios of Phaleron, even though he still maintained a garrison in Mounichia.

The restoration (pp. 29 ff.) of the archon Peithidemos to his former position in 267/6 makes it practically certain that the usual date for the beginning of the Chremonidean War, 267 B.C., is correct.

The tribe Ptolemais is assumed (p. 83) to be functioning in 223/2. Pritchett has since determined the exact date of its foundation at 224/3³, and explained Athens' courting of Ptolemy as a counter-weight to the Achaean League's alliance with Antigonos Doson.

The chief importance of the book is, of course, epigraphical. Ferguson and Dinsmoor had believed that the tribal cycles of the magistrates concerned were significant for the beginning and ending of various kinds of catalogues and inventories. Pritchett and Meritt now show that where the lists in question were authorized and paid for by the state, the determining cycles were those of the secretaries of the Council, not those of the magistrates immediately involved. This new and reasonable principle, established by application to various lists and inventories, and combined with the historically highly probable date for Peithidemos and

¹This review has been delayed by the war, which made the necessary access to technical books and journals impossible.

²Phormion, son of Hedylos, should be excised as Priest of Asklepios in 211/0 (pp. xxv and 78)—Pritchett in *A.J.P.*, 1941, pp. 358-60. Pritchett also points out that Euthydemos of Eleusis, and Demon, son of Demomeles, who are listed on p. 75 as Priests of Asklepios in 355/4 and 330/29 respectively, were not priests of the Asklepieion in Athens, and should be omitted from the list. Attention may also be called here to Raubitschek's suggestion (*Hesperia* XI, 1942, p. 311) that the demotic of Prokles, son of Perikles, secretary in Diodotos' year 192/1, may be restored on prosopographical grounds as 'Αλαϊεύς.

³*A.J.P.* 1942 pp. 413 ff. This article on Ptolemais is reprinted as Chapter Two of Pritchett's *Five Attic Tribes* after Kleisthenes, Baltimore, 1943.

the epigraphically probable position of Diomedon⁴, forms the basis for a readjustment of the archon list of the early part of the third century which adopts the "cyclical framework" advocated by Dinsmoor in 1931 (but abandoned by him in 1939), and succeeds in satisfying in detail the extremely numerous requirements of the problem.

In their discussion of the chronology of the early part of the third century Pritchett and Meritt draw attention (pp. 85-6) to a far from obvious source of confusion pointed out by Fotheringham but subsequently neglected: definite astronomical dates which use Athenian month-names cannot be used as evidence for the Athenian civil calendar. The Metonic and Kallippic cycles, as used by astronomers, must have followed some regular system of intercalation, but the Athenian civil calendar allowed much arbitrary latitude in the matter. Kirchner's restorations of I.G. II² 646 and 647 are thus defended against Dinsmoor's ingenious criticism.

The archon list of the second century is accepted for the most part as given by Dinsmoor—only three or four names are different, and there is no difference in the general scheme. But about a dozen new inscriptions are here fully published for the first time.

In general a difference of approach between Dinsmoor's books and the various works of the authors of this one adds interest to the discussion. Dinsmoor's primary attention is fixed upon the general scheme—particular inscriptions are explained in the light of it. Pritchett and Meritt are chiefly concerned with the inscriptions, which they explain as far as possible⁵. Thus while Dinsmoor is a master of the minutiae of "architectural epigraphy" and Meritt never more impressive than in his drawing of historical implications, it is still clear that the one is more interested in general explanations, the other in basic facts. The explanation and the fact cannot exist separately, but it is no new observation that men have always been more attracted by the one or by the other.

The evidence of letter forms for determining chronology is used throughout the book effectively but with great caution. At present it is only partially available even to very experienced scholars; and the only dependable published guide, Kirchner's *Imagines Inscriptionum Atticarum*, is far too brief and contains

⁴Kirchner's revival of the theory that there were two Diomedons (*Harvard Studies in Class. Phil. Supp.* Vol. I, 1940, pp. 503-7) is based on a false reading in I.G. II² 791, an attractive but misleading prosopographical argument, and a now demonstrably incorrect date for Polyekutos.

⁵Difficulties which occur to the reader are sometimes passed over in silence, presumably because the authors have no explanation to offer. It is, for instance, very curious that new cycles both of secretaries of the Council and of Priests of Asklepios should have been planned to begin in 307/6, but with Aiantis XI in one case and with Antigonis I in the other,

too many inscriptions of uncertain date⁶. One of the most useful results of studies like the present, in which much labor is expended on the exact dating of essentially uninteresting inscriptions, will be a future *Imagines* so full and so dependable that important but undated documents can be placed in their proper context on the evidence of letter forms alone. It is an ideal still far from realization.

The book is well produced, with a pleasant format and illustrations good enough to be really useful in checking doubtful readings; it is also singularly free from the slips and misprints, which are almost inevitable in works of this kind; the reviewer noticed only one. In conclusion it may be observed that while Greek epigraphy was until recently almost a German science, German scholars have contributed comparatively little to the discussion of these problems since the publication of I.G. II², while in England only Tarn has taken a serious part. It is a matter for some satisfaction that where Ferguson showed the way and the recent excavations in the Athenian agora provided much of the material, American scholars have taken the lead in solving these complicated and important problems.

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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

ANCIENT SPIES

The dreaded Gestapo, with its furtive, brutal organization, is popularly considered to be the last word in Secret Service ruthlessness. But the Secret Service is far from modern. The Romans had a system that was at least as bloody and effective.

The head of the Roman Secret Service was the Emperor himself. Spies and informers, delatores, were in his personal pay. These informers acquired tremendous influence with some of the Emperors, and their private wealth increased accordingly. One of their favorite techniques was to have private legacies made invalid so that they would pass to the public treasury, with a consequent fat bonus for themselves. The practice, begun under Augustus, had by the time of Titus reached such a height of terror, counter-plot and downright panic that Titus, bent on reform, had spies flogged publicly; then exiled to Sardinia or Corsica, or sold into slavery.

One of the most notorious of such spies was a certain Regulus. His specialty was informing against innocent persons on charges of treason. The reigns of Nero and of Domitian were his happy hunting-grounds. Regulus, so says his contemporary, the Younger Pliny, is a difficult bird to catch. He is rich; he is a shrewd intriguer; he has no small body of followers, and a still larger

and there is a similar anomaly in 247. The facts are established, but the difficulty is not discussed.

⁶See Meritt, *Epigraphica Attica*, p. 94.

circle of those who fear him. Regulus, moreover, was a long-winded speaker, always inducing the judges to let him speak on. He had a pleasant little way with him, that the Nazis adopted wholesale. 'I lost no time,' says Regulus, 'in getting a sight of my opponent's throat, and consider only the easiest way of slitting it.' These tactics, supported by fiendish coldbloodedness, brought him from utter poverty to immense wealth.

It was unsafe to whisper an innocent remark on last night's gladiatorial show. It was fatal to sit in a tavern with two friends and discuss the prospects of the Green and the Blue in the forthcoming chariot races. Even to talk aloud in your own home among your own family was hazardous. Every ear was on the alert. Often the spies resorted to the employment of meretrices to extract information, reliable or not, from their clients.

Romans, especially those of considerable wealth, lived in continuous dread of the private spy, the blackmailer. Soldiers, dressed as civilians, acted as secret police, frequenting the houses of nobles and inducing frank utterances about the Emperor's person. The informer saw a ready means of financial competence in his grasp, without risk. The only qualification was effrontery. He flourished because executive machinery, responsible for bringing offenders to justice, was rusty and creaking. Any citizen could thus turn informer, bring a criminal action against an innocent citizen, and ruin him. Augustus encouraged the spy system by offering large rewards for convictions of violations of the new marriage laws. The spy was in heaven. Another enactment made disrespectful comment against the Emperor punishable by death and confiscation of property. There were professional 'gangs' to help in this wholesale exile and death of citizens and confiscation of property. Sometimes the Emperor himself, in disguise, would saunter out at night, roaming the vast city. Sometimes an Emperor would talk in Greek to hide his identity and listen, in street or tavern, to odd scraps of talk about himself.

Hadrian organized a special corps, the *frumentarii*, first as police, and subsequently as spies over his own friends.

Tigellinus had Apollonius of Tyana watched constantly, while standing or sitting, speaking or eating. It was noted with whom he ate, when he made sacrifices. Apollonius calls Rome a 'city all eyes and ears.'

Caracalla made the soldiery answerable to him alone for all reports that they brought.

In the fourth century Diocletian reorganized the secret police who persecuted the innocent and concealed crimes such as counterfeiting.

Seneca says all this spying was promoted by the swarm of idlers in Rome. 'Hence this frightful vice of spying on public and private affairs'.

Spies, of course, could be bought. Martial mentions one who received 20,000 sesterces for being deaf.

If you melted down an imperial statue, your property was doomed. A quarter of your estate went to the spy. This was a favorite Nazi device. Under Tiberius, Caligula, Nero, and Domitian, to be denounced by a spy was tantamount to conviction. Two professional spies, Eprius and Cossutianus, accusing the innocent Thræsea and Soranus, were awarded the equivalent of 25,000 dollars each, while an associate, Ostorius, received an amount equal to 6,000 dollars.

Nazi methods of torture, secret visits, and sudden disappearances are far from modern. Once three Roman senators, bent on a little easy spying, concealed themselves between the roof and the ceiling of a victim's house, while a confederate made the victim talk against the Emperor.

Among the Nazis it was not unusual for a son to inform against his father 'for the good of the State.' In 24 A.D. a son accused his father, Vibius Serenus, of treason. 'The city was in deep alarm; never was there need of greater caution against a man's nearest relatives. Men were afraid to meet, afraid to talk, . . . they even feared things dumb and inanimate, the roofs and the walls.' That sounds like an eyewitness reporting conditions among the Nazis. It is, however, a comment on the spy system made by Tacitus.

Occasionally, there were respites. At first Caligula made a gesture of discouraging the spies. Nero reduced their personal rewards. Titus repressed them. Domitian checked them at first, then gave them free rein. Spies even crept into Roman prisons, stealthily listening to prisoners' talk. Trajan had all spies banished. They flourished again, however, under Commodus and Caracalla. In the reign of Aurelian, too, political espionage was so rife that victims could not be tried fast enough.

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ERASMUS HALL

AENEID VI.190-204

In *Mélanges Bidez* 487-494 Leon Herrmann asserts that the doves which lead the hero to the golden bough remind the reader of the doves of Munda mentioned by Suetonius (Aug. 94.11). I, for my part, deny such reminiscence. All that Suetonius says is that the tree growing from the palm which Caesar had ordered spared was used by these birds for nesting, although they dislike the *dura atque aspera frons*. The *ostentum*, he says, moved Caesar to make Octavian his successor. Herrmann refers the *ostentum* to the doves, while in reality the significance lies in the fact that the offshoot of the palm tree grew in a few days bigger than the mother tree, just as Augustus was destined to be greater than his grand-uncle.

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